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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/046,614

01/14/2002

Charles Michael Birtcher

06242 USA

2701

23543

7590

04/26/2004

AIR PRODUCTS AND CHEMICALS, INC.
PATENT DEPARTMENT
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EXAMINER

WALTON, GEORGE L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3753

DATE MAILED: 04/26/2004

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/046,614

Applicant(s)

BIRTCHE ET AL.

Examiner

George L. Walton

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4 & 5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1-6, 9-16 and 18-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either patent to Gregg et al (6,199,599 B1, 6,296,026 B1 or 6,457,494 B1, see figures 5A-7M) in view of DuRoss et al. The above claims are readable on the patent to either patent to Gregg et al with the single exception of utilizing specific type of valves for process and purge containers, i.e. pneumatic diaphragm valves. The patent to DuRoss et al teaches the above exception. In view of the teaching of DuRoss et al, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to provide the teaching of Ross to either patent to Gregg et al as taught by elements 102, 104, 106 and 302, if desired. Such a modification provides no unobvious or unexpected result. Note that the limitation of claims 9 and 18 is merely obvious design choice in view

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of the purge process of Gregg et al. Figure 8 teaches a non-referenced controller positioned on the top of cabinet 1000.

Claims 7-8 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Gregg et al in view of DuRoss et al as applied to claims 1-6, 9-16 and 18-21 above, and further in view of Birtcher et al. The above claims are readable on the above combination of Gregg et al in view of DuRoss et al with the single exception of having an ultrasonic sensor or detector for detecting solvent in a manifold and/or to determine when a bulk container is empty. The patent to Birtcher et al teaches the above exception. In view of the teaching of Birtcher et al, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to provide the above exception to the device of Gregg et al as taught by elements 54, 56 and 58, if desired. Such modification provides no unobvious or unexpected result. Also, Birtcher et al teaches a controller 118 disposed on cabinet 116.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to George L. Walton whose telephone number is 703-308-2596. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dave Scherbel can be reached on 703-308-1272. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



George L. Walton
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3753

GLW